



BEYOND DENOMINATION

Rabbi Irwin Keller
Session 2 – December 11, 2023
Modernity

Rearrangement of Jews on the Map

- Expulsion from Spain (1492) and Portugal (1496)
- Eastward push of Ashkenazi Jews
- The “New” World

Eastern Europe: Jewish Upheaval

- The Chmelnicki Massacres (1648-1657)
- The Sabbatean Movement (1648-1666)
 - Important name: Shabtai Tzvi
- The Ba'al Shem Tov and the Birth of Chasidism (early and mid-1700s)
 - Important name: Israel ben Eliezer, the Ba'al Shem Tov
 - Important concepts: *kabbalah*, *d'veykut*, *kavanah*, *rebbe*
- The Growth of Chasidism
 - Important names: Shneur Zalman of Lyadi, Nachman of Bratzlav, *inter alia*
- In Response: the *Misnagdim* or Litvaks

Western and Central Europe: Modernity and Equality

- The Jewish Enlightenment Movement and Political Emancipation
 - Important name: Moses Mendelssohn
- The Birth of Reform Judaism
 - Important name: Abraham Geiger
 - Important concepts: *dina d'malkhuta dina*, emphasis on ethics, messianic *era*, prayer in languages other than Hebrew
- In Response: Ultra-Orthodox or *Hareidi* Judaism (“no change ever”)
 - Important names: Samson Raphael Hirsch and Moses Schreiber, the *Chatam Sofer*
 - Important concept: *chadash asur min hatorah*

In America

- American Reform Judaism
 - Important names: Isaac Mayer Wise
 - Important concepts: Pittsburgh Platform: only moral laws are binding; we maintain only such ceremonies as elevate and sanctify our lives.
- Jewish Population Growth and Demographics
 - ~250,000 in 1880 to over 3,000,000 in 1920
- The *Treyfe* Banquet
 - What's a little neck clam between friends?
- In Response: Establishment of Conservative Judaism
 - Important concept: *halakhah* is binding but subject to change
- In Response: Establishment of Reconstructionist Judaism
 - Important name: Mordecai Kaplan
 - Important concepts: Judaism as an evolving civilization, no chosenness, non-anthropomorphic and non-personal deity
- Separate and Related Development: Jewish Renewal
 - Important name: Zalman Schachter-Shalomi

